

Building Materials May Soon Be Released For Civilian Use

Great Construction Boom Is Predicted

The War Production Board has definitely assured the AFL's Housing Committee that many building materials will soon be released for civilian construction, Boris Shishkin, AFL economist, told a New York conference of labor leaders this week.

Shishkin, one of the speakers at the conference called by the New York OPA Labor Advisory Committee, predicted the greatest rise in construction activities in this country after the war.

To encourage the purchase of millions of homes, organized labor must make sure that profiteering, speculation and jerry-building are not permitted to flourish, Shishkin declared.

Shishkin's revelation of the forthcoming WPB action was in response to a question asked by Sec. Treas. John J. Brennan of the Building and Construction Trades Council, who wanted to know why there was so much delay when materials and mechanics are available.

The conference unanimously adopted a resolution urging the immediate release of materials in order to make possible renovation of closed up apartment houses. This move would ease the city's critical housing shortage right away and provide jobs for idle mechanics.

Shishkin also disclosed that the OPA is currently working with the WPB on price ceilings of building materials in response to another question asked by Brennan.

The conference adopted several resolutions:

- 1. Supporting the national AFL-CIO joint program to hold postwar prices to present levels for a designated period after the war.
- 2. Urging upward revision of the national wage policy of the WLB in order to provide adequate purchasing power.

Other speakers included Daniel P. Woolley, Regional OPA Administrator and Edward Nyegaard, Acting Labor Chief of the Regional WPB. Martin Lacey, secretary of the Building and Construction Trades Council's Executive Committee who heads the Labor Advisory Committee, was chairman.

A.F.L. MORTGAGE BURNED
CHATTANOOGA, Tenn.—Public burning of the four-year-old mortgage on the Chattanooga Labor Temple highlighted a celebration of the Central Labor Council here. The building, now debt-free, represents an investment of \$42,000 by 45 local unions.

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Unionists' Dramatic Account Of Magnitude Of This War

Peterson of Machinists, and Wegener of Electricians, Relate Experiences On Tour Of Battlefields; Patterson's Unusual Tribute To Workers

A dramatic account of the magnitude of the war in Europe, as seen through the eyes of practical labor men, was presented this week to a Washington audience of outstanding representatives of labor and government, at a dinner in the Statler Hotel. Replete with thrilling episodes, the story was told by Eric Peterson, vice president of the Machinists, and A. L. Wegener, assistant to the president of the Electrical Workers. At the invitation of the War Department, they made an 18-day tour of England and France.

Also highlighting the affair was a glowing tribute paid to labor by Under-Secretary of War Robert P. Patterson, one of a number of military men who were guests at the dinner. Patterson, too, had just returned from a visit to the fighting fronts where he had crossed trails with the labor delegation.

Speaking extemporaneously, Patterson said: "The support given to the armed forces by free American workers in the nation's hour of peril was such that we may say that no armed forces have ever had the like of it, anywhere, at any time."

"Also, your own members are over there in good measure, in all branches of service. They are true soldiers and heroes."

"Bear in mind that the great momentum of our forces on all fronts come from here at home. Our men in uniform could not have put forth their magnificent effort were it not for the muscle, sweat and toil of the men and women at home. So, in honoring your representatives I am honoring the entire labor movement."

Generals at the fighting fronts apparently feel like Patterson. For example, General "Blood and Guts" Patton told the labor delegates that "the war would have been over long ago" with the Allies crushed and the Nazis victorious, "had it not been for the production record of the workers in the United States."

Such views were voiced, too, it will be recalled, by Marshal Stalin of Russia, who toasted the production record of American workers at the party he held with President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill in Teheran.

In view of such statements, how can anyone, having seen a semblance of fairness, suggest that American workers have not done their utmost to back up the men on the battlefronts?

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WAC Beauty

Here's lovely Pvt. Kathleen McCann of Detroit, Mich., who was chosen the prettiest WAC in the country in competition with thousands of other beautiful service women at the New Jersey State Fair.

army as a whole is doing a great job of restoring all possible disabled equipment, even to the clothing of the men.

"Not until we got there did we realize the enormity of the preparations needed for an invasion of the continent. It is too bad some of those who yelled for a second front long before we were ready weren't put in charge so they could realize what we were up against."

Secretary of Labor Frances Perkins spoke briefly after the laborites told their story.

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Construction Of New Roads Will Help Bldg. Trades

Three Billion Dollar Program Must Pass Senate At This Session

At three billion dollar road construction program, which would provide hundreds of thousands of postwar jobs, especially for building trades workers, is one of the main Administration measures pending before the Senate at the present time.

Unless the Senate acts at this session, everything may be held up for months as approval of the State Legislature is needed. Forty-five of the State Legislatures convene in January.

With the defeat of Germany clearly indicated the road program would be one of the best ways of taking up the slack in employment. It would provide jobs not only for building mechanics, but for workers in all related industries—in addition to stimulating commerce throughout the country.

The program as drafted by the Roosevelt Administration calls for the expenditure of \$3,375,250,000 over a period of three years—60% by the Federal Government and the rest by the individual states. The money would be divided almost equally between urban highways, the Federal-aid highway system and farm to market roads.

Building trades workers would

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Carpenters' Local Favors Roosevelt

SAN FRANCISCO.—Bad news awaited GOP presidential candidate Thomas E. Dewey when his special train pulled into San Francisco. Pile Drivers Local 34 of United Bro. of Carpenters announced it had voted overwhelmingly to endorse Pres. Roosevelt for a fourth term and donated \$1,300 for AFL and united labor political action in this area.

get jobs not only in building the roads, but in putting up the bridges, viaducts and tunnels that would be needed. They would also be kept busy erecting terminals, houses and business buildings in the new communities that would spring up alongside the huge new road system.

While indications are that the Senate will go along, the fact remains that the Government's \$1,000,000,000 harbor and river program has been laid over until after the elections. Union pressure is needed to make sure that the same thing doesn't happen to the road program.

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N. Y. Painters Give Day's Pay To Relief

NEW YORK CITY.—For the fourth successive year union painters throughout the city turned over a day's pay of \$12 to be distributed among the Red Cross and 24 other war relief and charity organizations. It was announced by District Council 9 of the Brotherhood of Painters, Decorators and Paperhangers, American Federation of Labor. Since 1941 the painters have raised \$150,000 in this manner.

Taking part in the "Work for Victory Day" drive for the first time this year were the special autonomous craft locals of the council, including the scenic artists, sign pictorial painters, screen cartoonists, hotel & department store painters.

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Radio Program On 'Progress Of Labor'

CHICAGO.—Hailed as the finest radio dramatization of American labor history ever put on the air, Studs Terkel's "The Progress of Labor" is evoking national interest. It was first aired over WCFL, the only union labor-owned station in America.

Terkel's hour-long dramatization employs 73 characters and a 25-man orchestra.

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